

## Message Text

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44

ACTION SY-10

INFO OCT-01 AF-10 ISO-00 L-03 SCCT-02 EUR-25 EA-11 INR-10

CIAE-00 NSAE-00 DODE-00 PM-07 NSC-10 SPC-03 SAM-01

SS-20 PPT-02 SCA-01 /116 W  
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R 281315Z FEB 74

FM AMEMBASSY TANANARIVE

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 6036

INFO AMEMBASSY PRETORIA

C O N F I D E N T I A L TANANARIVE 0261

E. O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: ASEC, MA

SUBJ: MARINE GUARDS

REF: TANANARIVE 0227

FOR: RSO/PRETORIA

1. DCM TOOK ADVANTAGE OF 27FEB MEETING ON OTHER SUBJECTS WITH MOFA DIRECTOR BILATERAL RELATIONS RATSIMANDRESY TO TELL HIM EMBASSY PLANNING HAVE SMALL MARINE GUARD DETACHMENT. EXPLAINED THAT MAJORITY OF U.S. EMBASSIES STAFFED WITH MARINES FOR INTERNAL SECURITY AND USG HAS DECIDED TO ASSIGN THEM EMBASSY TANANARIVE AS PROTECTION AGAINST POSSIBLE PENETRATION FROM PRC AND SOVIET EMBASSY AGENTS AND BECAUSE OF WORLDWIDE INCREASE IN TERRORISM OF ALL SORTS, INCLUDING AGAINST DIPLOMATS.

2. DCM AVOIDED ASKING GOMR PERMISSION FOR MARINES AT EMBASSY BUT EXPLAINED WE WANTED GOMR TO BE AWARE OF DECISION FIRST AND NOT TO LEARN ABOUT IT FROM OUTSIDE SOURCES, E.G., ANTI-AMERICAN TANA PRESS. UNDOUBTEDLY SENSING WE WOULD BE RELUCTANT GO AHEAD WITH ASSIGNMENT MARINE DETACHMENT IF GOMR FLATLY OPPOSED, RATSIMANDRESY SAID SEVERAL TIMES, "DON'T WORRY". HE FURTHER EXPLAINED GOMR COULD NOT DENY MARINES TO U.S. EMBASSY WHEN FRENCH EMBASSY HAS SECURITY GUARDS AND WE COULD ALL BE  
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SURE FUTURE PRC AND SOVIET EMBASSIES WOULD HAVE LARGE NUMBER

INTERNAL SECURITY GUARDS VASSED OFF AS HAVING OTHER FUNCTIONS.

3. RATSIMANDRESY FIRST SUGGESTED THAT MARINES SHOULD BE ATTACHED TO "THE COLONEL'S STAFF", I.E. DAO. DCM EXPLAINED THAT THEY WOULD REPORT DIRECTLY TO EMBASSY ADMINOFF AND THAT WE BELIEVED IT BETTER NOT TO HIDE FACT THEY WOULD BE INTERNAT GUARDE. RATSIMANDRESY REPLIED, "THAT IS INTERNAL EMBASSY MATTER ANYWAY". HOWEVER, EVIDENCE OF SOME CONCERN OVER CERTAIN ELEMENTS IN MOFA DRAWING ATTENTION OF OUTSIDERS TO ARRIVAL MARINES AND PURPOSELY CAUSING TROUBLE WAS EVIDENCED BY HIS ADVICE THAT:

(1) EMBASSY NOT RPT NOT SEND DIP NOTE SPECIFYING PERSONNEL WERE MARINES, AND

(2) THEIR PASSPORTS BE SENT DIRECTLY ONLY TO HIM OR TO MOFA DIRECTOR OF PROTOCOL FOR PERSONAL ATTENTION WHEN TIME COMES TO GET THEIR VISAS EXTENDED.

FACT THAT HE CHARACTERIZED DIRECTOR OF PROTOCOL AS "PRO-WESTERN" IN CONTEXT THIS CONVERSATION LEADS TO CONCLUSION HE CONSIDERS CERTAIN OTHERS IN FOREIGN MINISTRY TO BE ACTIVELY PRO-COMMUNIST COUNTRIES . AS DCM LEFT, RATSIMANDRESY RETURNED TO SUBJECT OF MARINES AND COMMENTED AGAIN THAT THERE IS NOTHING TO WORRY ABOUT SINCE MOFA AND AMPAHIBE, I.E., HEAD OF GOT'S ENTOURAGE, WOULD HAVE NO OBJECTIONS.

4. IN VIEW RATSIMANDRESY'S UNHESITATINGLY POSITIVE RESPONSE, WE ARE MORE CONFIDENT THAN BEFORE THAT GOMR WILL NOT RAISE OBSTACLES TO ASSIGNMENT MARINES. HOWEVER, RATSIMANDRESY HAS MADE MISTAKES BEFORE IN ANTICIPATING FONMIN'S REACTION (ADMITTED AS MUCH FRANKLY AS REGARDS ANNOUNCEMENT DIEGO GARCIA EXPANSION). THEREFORE, WE CANNOT BE TOTALLY SURE GOMR POSITION WILL NOT BE CHANGED AT LEAST UNTIL AFTER RATSIMANDRESY HAS CHANCE TO REPORT ABOVE CONVERSATION TO FONMIN. LATTER IS PRESENTLY OUT OF COUNTRY, AND HIS DATE OF RETURN, RATSIMANDRESY ADMITTED, IS SECRET KEPT CLOSELY BY MINISTER FOR HIS OWN PURPOSE. MEANTIME, HOWEVER, PLANS SHOULD PROCEED ASSIGN MINIMUM FIVE-MAN MARINE DETACHMENT.

MENDENHALL

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